INTRODUCTION: This course presents a sociological perspective on social problems in contemporary US society. Sociological approaches to such institutions as the economy, health, education, and the family are explored. Attention will be given to comparison with other industrialized countries as well.

~First, attention will be paid to rationalization, bureaucratization (Max Weber) and McDonaldization, particularly when it comes to the food industry: Industry/Agriculture/Big Business/Government.

~Second, health and the health care system will be explored in terms of how our health as a society is rationalized and trivialized, and the serious financial and physical consequences for people. We will use the symbolic interaction theory to discuss how individuals also rationalize their own health. This theory will cover the “meaning of food” and eating for Americans and other cultures.

~Third, rationalization at work and distribution of jobs (Fast Food Nation) will also be discussed. Oregon data as well as national data will be used to examine labor trends and how that affects industries and individuals. Within this context we will look at changes in the U.S. Economy, inequality, the distinct role of politics, and the role of education in addressing stratification and overall life chances. The problem of hunger in America will be examined very briefly.

~Fourth, education will be discussed. We will examine research on inequities, including social class and race.

~Fifth, we will be exploring a video and having a discussion about consumer debt and the macro reasons (corporate and political), and effects of, this problem on our society and the individuals within it.

~In the latter part of the course, social problems affecting the family will be studied in terms of the effects of poverty, alcohol/drug abuse, child abuse, foster care/adoption. Factors contributing to institutional stability and change are identified. Turning Stones will provide a “real-life” understanding of the serious
problems many families face, and their interactions with social health and welfare agencies. Lecture and discussion will include information on local programs and data. Videos, news stories and local hard data will add to the discussion of the problems of drugs for families.

Of great importance, we will be looking at solutions: to address the changing economy, labor market, smart money management (individual,) food and health concerns. We will explore what is working for people.

Learner Outcomes...
At the end of the term a student will be able to:

1) utilize a sociological perspective on social behavior to examine social inequality and social institutions;
2) examine specific social institutions from a macro level orientation and understand the functions of these institutions;
3) demonstrate an understanding of the theory of rationalization, and of McDonaldization, and explain how those principles, in particular, have affected U.S. food production and distribution;
4) describe the connection between macro forces and individuals, especially in terms of a person's health and health care.
5) describe factors associated with family problems and child abuse and current national and local statistics.
6) describe empirical findings in the discipline;
7) use assignments and discussions to formulate applications of principles.

GRADING: The course grade is based on the following:
A. Annotations on articles and books.
   Choice of 8 papers @ 10 points each. To help with workload, and allow for crises or overloaded weeks, you only do 8/10. You must skip one of these: #1, #2, #3, #4, or #6. You MUST do #5 and at least the last two of the annotations for Turning Stones (#9 & #10) -----------80 total.
B. Two writing assignments (1@ 50 pts., 1@ 15 pts.) ------------------------65 total
C. Assignment on “Groups for Change”-------------------------------20 pts.
D. Discussions: 3 pts per week X 9 (out of 10 weeks)= 27 , plus 4 extra points for the Groups for Change comments discussion= 31 pts. You MUST skip one week of a discussion, NOT Groups for Change

196 points available
Scale: 184+ = (A), 176-183= (A-), 170-175 (B+), 164-169 (B), 156-163 (B-), 150-155 (C+), 145-149 (C), 137-144 (C-), 131-136 (D+), 125-130 (D), 117-124 (D-)

* Please use this grading scale when tracking your grade; D2L percentages are not accurate as the record includes points for all annotations and discussions, when you do not do all of them.

EXTRA CREDIT: You may view a current movie or video, which you can relate to this course. Write a 2-page paper explaining how this relates to this course and use at least 3 concepts from the course that you can explain via the movie/video. 5 points

Annotations: These are explanatory notes on content that I often direct in the instructions. You should be summarizing, explaining, and analyzing: things/facts that you learned from the reading of the books, videos, articles AND the weekly notes that coincide with it.; themes; ideas, etc. The more you can synthesize your ideas, while summarizing content, the better. While I often include questions on videos, if there is a video assigned, you MUST write at least two points on the video showing that you did watch it. For Turning Stones, you can write about the story/events and your personal reactions, in addition to any facts that are raised in the book or in the readings or in online materials. Each paper will cover the assignment for that “class”, and turned in at the end of the week, Sunday night, and should include 8 important points- total, minimum of 2 1/2 typed, double-spaced pages. These papers should be considered like a participation grade...if you do a decent job and turn them in on time, you should receive 8 to10 points. Please put the assignment # in the heading of your paper and place in the appropriate dropbox. There is a rubric (or grading feedback) on the course home page on the right side, and there is a sample paper was that was "excellent" there also. I am not able to provide written feedback to every paper every time, so the grading feedback that coordinates with your numerical score is important.
For the most part, the deadline for written work is Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. Exceptions will be noted on D2L.

Discussions - you can skip one discussion, so NO late discussions allowed. Your first post for each discussion will be due by Saturday at 5:00 p.m. to allow students time to read it and reply before the Sunday midnight deadline. You will lose a point if you do not post by Saturday at 5:00.

Writing exercises - 4 points deducted after Sunday night deadline for the first week, another 2 points deducted after that. Writing exercise #1 is particularly time-consuming, so please allow for that.

Groups for Change - It is important to get this in on time, so your group members can read and post about it. So, a deduction of 5 points will be given after the deadline.

Annotations – 1 point deducted after Sunday night deadline for the next week, then 2 points deducted after the second full week. Keep in mind, you only have to write 8 weekly papers over an 11-week period.

Example: If a paper is due Sunday Jan 22 at 11:59 p.m., anything turned in after that, and until the next Sunday, Jan 29 at 11:59 p.m. is 1 week late. After that, it becomes 2 weeks late.

Proper format: Please use Word docs or the free Open Office word processing program (.odt) [http://www.openoffice.org/]. I cannot open Mac documents (.Pages) unless they are properly exported to Word.

Suggestions on how to attack the workload:

1) Read the associated checklist for each class and/or the syllabus outline with "to-do" list. Check Course News for announcements.

2) Read the instructions for the annotation and the instructions for the discussion first. When I say that, I mean read the instructions for the discussion in the actual discussion page (after you click on your group's week 1 discussion, for example). That will give you the exact questions AND the number of replies I am asking for that week.

3) Read the notes posted in Course Content in the modules. Consider this like a lecture. It is me imparting info, and posing questions for thought, like I would in class. There also links in the notes and please read linked material. The questions I pose in the notes are not necessarily ones you have to answer, although sometimes the annotation instructions may include one. They are questions for thought. The annotations will be based on the class notes.

4) Complete the annotation. The annotation instructions are all for that one annotation (paper). Prepare that in numbered form as you answer the questions. So, when you look at annotation 1 instructions, all of those questions (1 through 8) are annotation #1. Please do not include the questions in your papers, just the number and the response. Most annotations will be 8 thorough paragraphs although some students write more than that and that is fine. There is a sample annotation on the right side of the home page. That should serve as a great example.

SOC310 - Outline for course

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings/Content</th>
<th>To Do this week</th>
<th>What's due?</th>
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<tr>
<td>1- Jan 9</td>
<td>Introduction. Thinking about social problems. Sociological theoretical perspectives Fast Food nation (FFN)- the beginnings of fast food, history. Overview of health care and effects on individuals.</td>
<td>Read Week 1 notes Watch the video &quot;Sicko&quot; after reading instructions for annotation 1. FFN-begin... intro,ch,1,2,5 hopefully read by Jan 16. Review the instructions for Writing Assignment #1 in module &quot;Materials for Course&quot; (not due for a few weeks)</td>
<td>1) Discussion board #1: Post per instructions for Week 1 and reply per instructions. Initial post due Sat 1/14 by 5:00 p.m. Replies due by Sunday 1/15 @11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 1 due in dropbox 1/15 @11:59p.m.</td>
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<td>2- Jan 16</td>
<td>Max Weber. Rationalization. McDonaldization: definition, 4 dimensions, irrationality of rationality. Fast Food nation discussion. Food production and Food Politics. Sociology of Food and Eating. Read week 2 notes View video: “ Food Inc.” OR the video Peter Singer &quot;The Ethics of What We Eat&quot; (link provided) OR Michael Pollan &quot;The Omnivore's Dilemma&quot; if you have seen Food Inc. Watch early in week if possible. Skim articles by mid week if possible. Begin to read FFN 3 &amp;4 to complete by Jan 26, suggested deadline. 1) Discussion board #2: Post and reply per instructions. Initial post due by Sat 1/21 at 5:00 p.m.. Replies due by Sunday 1/22 @11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 2 due in dropbox 1/22 @ 11:59 p.m. 3) Choose your organization for &quot;Groups for Change&quot; project by now and post your group's name in subject heading in proper board.</td>
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<td>3- Jan 23</td>
<td>The relationship between large corporations and our food. Rationalization and our personal health. FFN Ch. 6 - suggested by end of week) Read week 3 notes Video: parts of King Corn on Youtube (links included), 1) Discussion board #3: Post/reply per instructions. Initial post due by Sat 1/28 by 5:00 p.m. Replies due by Sunday 1/29 @11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 3 due Sun 1/29 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>4 - Jan 30</td>
<td>Food Justice. Food security. Fast Food Nation: Ranching as a changed industry. Factory Towns and Big Business. Dangerous Jobs. Rationalization and Health care. Companies profiting from obesity: pharmaceuticals and others. Organizations and small groups working towards positive change regarding health, fitness, nutrition, food, and more. FFN Ch. 7,8,9 (for annotation #5) Read Week 4 notes View clips of &quot;Unnatural Causes&quot; on Youtube- links included, 1) Discussion board #4: Post and reply per instructions. Initial post due Sat 2/4 by 5:00 p.m. Replies due by Sunday 2/5 @11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 4 due Sun 2/5 @ 11:59 p.m. 3) If you can, by Feb 3, post your &quot;Groups for Change&quot; paper by cutting/pasting it into proper discussion board (links in week 5 course content) by putting the name of your organization in the subject line and also submitting the paper in dropbox to me.</td>
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| 5 - Feb 6 | Life chances: through the lens of class, race and gender. Wrap up FFN: Global Realization, Mad Cow. FFN: Ch. 10, epilogue, afterword Read week 5 notes You should have begun working on Writing Assignment #1- due Mon Feb 13 1) Monday Feb 6 is final deadline to post your Groups for Change paper in discussion board "Groups for Change - Post and comment" AND submit in dropbox to me. 2) Discussion Board #5 "Groups for Change": Begin commenting on your group members' organizations on Feb 6 (or earlier) by commenting in the same discussion board as the
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<td>6- Feb 13</td>
<td>Problems of work and unemployment&lt;br&gt;The economy and jobs.&lt;br&gt;Oregon labor trends and national trends.</td>
<td>Read week 6 notes and check out links&lt;br&gt;Read “Revenge of the Baristas” early in week (for annotation 6)&lt;br&gt;Read articles and data in this week's content, needed for annotation #6 1) Writing Assignment #1 due Mon Feb 13 11:59 p.m. 2) Discussion board #6: Post per instructions. Initial post due Sat 2/18 @ 5 p.m. Due by Sun 2/19 @11:59 p.m. 3) Annotation #6 due Sun 2/19</td>
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<td>7- Feb 20</td>
<td>Discussion on charts and graphs on the economy and poverty.&lt;br&gt;The effects of poverty education.&lt;br&gt;Cultural capital. Habitus School funding introduction.</td>
<td>Read week 7 notes and check out links. Watch the two video clips on poverty and education. Watch trailer for documentary &quot;Race to Nowhere.&quot;&lt;br&gt;Read article &quot;Indifferent to Inequality&quot; (for annotation 7.) 1) Discussion board #7: Post per instructions. Initial post due Sat 2/25 @ 5:00 p.m. Replies due by Sun 2/26 @11:59p.m. 2) Annotation #7 due Sun 2/26 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>8- Feb 27</td>
<td>A close look at research on school funding and national and local stats on schools. Charter schools, magnet schools.</td>
<td>Read week 8 notes&lt;br&gt;Try to begin reading Turning Stones (TS) early this week, suggested to read : Foreword, prologue, chs. 1,2. (for annotation 8) 2) Annotation 8 due Sun Mar 4 11:59 p.m. 3) Discussion board #8: Post per instructions. Initial post due Sat 3/3 @ 5 p.m. Replies due by Sunday 3/4 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>9- Mar 5</td>
<td>The Credit Crisis. Sub-prime lending. Predatory Lending. National debt and personal debt. College debt crisis. Macro-micro connections.</td>
<td>Read TS 3,4,5, early this week (for annotation 9)&lt;br&gt;Read week 9 notes&lt;br&gt;Watch video &quot;Maxed Out&quot; 1) Discussion board #9: Post per instructions. Initial post due Sat 3/10 @ 5 p.m. Replies due by Sun 3/11 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 9 due Sunday 3/11.</td>
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<td>10- Mar 12-&lt;br&gt;this content is for 2 weeks!</td>
<td>Child Abuse. Foster care. Adoption. Organizations and programs working to help families and children.</td>
<td>TS chs. 6,7,8, epilogue, afterword. (I scanned and posted the afterword as some editions don't have it.)&lt;br&gt;Read week 10 notes&lt;br&gt;Watch video: Methamphetamine Reminder: all students must complete Annotation 10.</td>
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<td>11- Mar 19-&lt;br&gt;finals week</td>
<td>Prepare Writing Exercise #2 on Turning Stones</td>
<td>Discussion #10 -post due by Monday Mar 19 @ 11:59 p.m. -replies by Sat Mar 24 @ 11:59 p.m. Due Sat Mar 24 @11:59 p.m.: 1) Writing Exercise #2 2) Annotation #10</td>
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